



COURSE OUTLINE

MUS 156
Course Number

History of American Pop Music
Course title

3
Credits

3 lecture
Hours

Catalog description:

Analytical and historical survey of American popular music with an emphasis on the period from 1950 to the present. Students will develop an understanding of the cultural, social, technological, and musical forces shaping each decade covered. Students will apply critical analysis to musical styles, instrumentation, and song structure in addition to issues of race, ethnicity, social class, and gender as formative factors influencing its evolution.

Prerequisites: None

Co-requisites: None

Required texts/other materials:

Covach and Flory. What's That Sound, 5nd edition, WW. Norton & Company, 2018.

Last revised: Fall 2021

Course coordinator: Scott Hornick, Associate Professor of Music – CM 149; 570-3716;
hornicks@mccc.edu

Course Goals:

The student will be able to:

1. Identify, define, and explain a wide variety of pop musical styles and genres. *(Gen Ed Goal 1, 6, 7 and 8; MCCC Core Skills A and G)*
2. Understand that popular music is shaped by and, in turn, has an impact on the social, political, and cultural milieu from which it arises. *(Gen Ed Goal 1, 6, 7 and 8; MCCC Core Skills A and G)*
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the chronological development of American pop music in the context of social, political, and historical forces affecting its evolution. *(Gen Ed Goal 1, 5, 6, 7 and 8; MCCC Core Skills A, C and G)*
4. Investigate, realize, and discuss the multicultural nature of American pop music as a hybridization and synthesis of disparate cultural influences including African, Latino, Caribbean, Scots – Irish folk music, as well as European “art” music. *(Gen Ed Goal 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8; MCCC Core Skills A, B, C, E and G)*
5. Analyze the role that fashion, archetype, and image play in the marketing and appeal of musical artists. *(Gen Ed Goal 1, 5, 6, 7 and 8; MCCC Core Skills A, C and G)*
6. Identify and distinguish between the use of confessional and artificial imagery in the content of pop music lyrics. *(Gen Ed Goal 1, 5, 6 and 7; MCCC Core Skills A and G)*
7. Understand how technological advances such as radio, recording media, (analog discs, magnetic tape, CD’s), electronic instruments, digital recording and editing software, and the internet create the circumstances under which new forms of popular music develop and, conversely, how new forms of music serve as a catalyst for further technological development. *(Gen Ed Goal 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8; MCCC Core Skills A, D, E and G)*
8. Explore and discuss the tension between art and commerce and the ancillary issue of critical vs. popular success. *(Gen Ed Goal 1, 6, 7 and 8; MCCC Core Skills A and G)*
9. Develop an individual “critical voice” demonstrated by the ability to analyze specific pieces of pop music, assessing their relative artistic merits, and defending his or her view to others both in writing and through discussion. *(Gen Ed Goal 1, 6, 7 and 8; MCCC Core Skills A and G)*
10. Analyze and discuss the issue of racial and gender discrimination throughout the history of American pop music. *(Gen Ed Goal 1, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9; MCCC Core Skills A C, D and G)*

Course-specific General Education Knowledge Goals and Core Skills

General Education Knowledge Goals

Goal 1. Communication. Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.

Goal 4. Technology. Students will use computer systems or other appropriate forms of technology to achieve educational and personal goals.

Goal 5. Social Science. Students will use social science theories and concepts to analyze human behavior and social and political institutions and to act as responsible citizens.

Goal 6. Humanities. Students will analyze works in the fields of art, music, or theater; literature; philosophy and/or religious studies; and/or will gain competence in the use of a foreign language.

Goal 7. History. Students will understand historical events and movements in World, Western, non-Western or American societies and assess their subsequent significance.

Goal 8. Diversity. Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples.

Goal 9. Ethical Reasoning and Action. Students will understand ethical issues and situations.

MCCC Core Skills

Goal A. Written and Oral Communication in English. Students will communicate effectively in speech and writing, and demonstrate proficiency in reading.

Goal B. Critical Thinking and Problem-solving. Students will use critical thinking and problem solving skills in analyzing information.

Goal C. Ethical Decision-Making. Students will recognize, analyze and assess ethical issues and situations.

Goal D. Information Literacy. Students will recognize when information is needed and have the knowledge and skills to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information for college level work.

Goal E. Computer Literacy. Students will use computers to access, analyze or present information, solve problems, and communicate with others.

Goal G. Intra-Cultural and Inter-Cultural Responsibility. Students will demonstrate an awareness of the responsibilities of intelligent citizenship in a diverse and pluralistic society, and will demonstrate cultural, global, and environmental awareness.

Evaluation of Student Learning

Each student's attainment of these objectives will be assessed using the following means of evaluation.

Evaluation Tools	% of Grade
Completion of and performance on weekly reading and writing assignments	20%
Midterm visual and aural test of students ability to identify performers, musical structures, styles and chronological context	20%
Completion and presentation of a research paper whose content will focus on an artist or genre, the degree of his/her/its social relevance, his/her/its place in the chronology of the music and impact on its further evolution	20%
A written "review" of a recording using appropriate journalistic language and employing established norms of critical analysis	20%
Attendance and participation in class discussion	20%

Student Success Coach: Mercer students have a Student Success Coach available to support their efforts during their first semester through graduation. Students can connect with a Coach by emailing Successcoach@mccc.edu or calling 570-3451. www.mccc.edu/coaching has useful information about coaching and student success. For additional information, please contact:

Latonya Ashford Ligon at 570-3292 or by email ashfordl@mccc.edu .

Academic Advising after your first semester: Faculty advisors provide help with completing your major after your first semester. Your faculty advisor should be listed on the MyMercer portal. If you need further assistance please contact your division Executive Assistant.

Liberal Arts: Debbie Stotland LA162 570-3378 Stotland@mccc.edu

Business & Stem: Doris Geck BS134 570-3482 Geckd@mccc.edu

Health Professions: Barbara Pieslak MS126 570-3383 pieslakb@mccc.edu

Use your "MyMercer" Portal: Your "MyMercer" portal contains your MercerMail, financial information, class schedule, grades, your advisor and other information. Check your "MyMercer" portal every day. Visit www.mccc.edu/mymercer to access your portal.

Center for Inclusion, Transition and Accessibility: Arlene Stinson, Director:

Mercer County Community College recognizes disability as an aspect of diversity and the Center for Transition, Inclusion and Accessibility works to ensure inclusive learning environments by encouraging the college community to examine accessibility and through the delivery of effective academic accommodations to qualified individuals. Mercer County Community College is in compliance with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

For information on Universal Design for Learning, information regarding meeting the needs of students with disabilities, or information regarding the provision of academic accommodations please visit the Center for Transition, Inclusion and Accessibility in LB216 or contact:

Arlene Stinson stinsona@mccc.edu, Lisa Ward wardl@mccc.edu or Susan Onaitis onaitiss@mccc.edu

Tutorial Center: Charles Haas, Director

Tutoring Center services are free and available for all students. Drop in or contact the following to schedule an appointment.

Charles Haas (WWC), LB214, 570-3452, haasc@mcccc.edu

Angela Frumin, (TC) 311, frumina@mccc.edu or John Kashmer, (WWC), LB214, kashmerj@mccc.edu

Career and Transfer Center: Planning to go to work or to transfer to a 4-year college after completing your Mercer degree? Contact the Career and Transfer Center for support and advice.

Letrice Thomas (WWC transfer services), SC201, 570-3397, thomasl@mccc.edu

Counseling Services: Are you experiencing personal challenges, feeling overwhelmed? Are you having stress and anxiety? Counseling services are available free of charge. Contact:

Dorothy Gasparro Ed.S, LPC, NCC, SC239, 570-3354, gasparrd@mccc.edu

Veteran's Services: If you are currently serving or have served in the US Armed Forces, or are a family member of someone who has, our Veterans Services Team is here to help you optimize your education benefits. Contact:

John Becker, SC220, 570-3240 or Jennifer Whitfield, SC222, 570-3269, whitfieje@mccc.edu or vets@mccc.edu

Important Fall 2018 dates:

09/11/18 – Last day for 100% refund

09/30/18– Start FASFA for spring

10/02/18 – 10-week semester starts

11/09/18 – Last day to withdraw from 14-week class

Academic Integrity Policy

As stated in the student handbook, "A student will be guilty of violating academic integrity if he/she (a) knowingly represents the work of others as his/her own, (b) uses or obtains unauthorized assistance in the execution of academic work, or (c) gives fraudulent assistance to another student." Students should read the Academic Integrity policy in the MCCC Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.

Academic Dishonesty will result in failure of this course.

Accommodations

Mercer County Community College is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in its programs. If you have a documented differing ability or think that you may have a differing ability that is protected under the ADA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, please contact Arlene Stinson in LB 216 stinsona@mccc.edu for information regarding support services.

Financial Aid Application Statement

It is recommended that student complete an application for financial aid to determine eligibility for financial assistance. Visit www.fafsa.edu.gov to complete your application. Applications should be completed **before** December 1, 2018. Students who are interested in MCCC Foundation scholarships are expected to complete an application as well.

Units of Study and Learning Objectives

UNIT I: Historical and Social Context

The student will be able to:

1. Identify important musical artists and classify the musical movements and time periods to which they belong.
2. Describe, contrast, and compare various musical genres and styles and connect them in their proper chronological context.
3. Illustrate the impact that social class, race, and gender had upon the careers of specific pop artists, the composition of their audiences, and on the history of pop music in general.
4. Assess and discuss the effect that social and political forces such as the Viet Nam war, the drug culture, and the civil and women's rights movements have on the popular music of the day.
5. Thoughtfully examine and expound on the issue of censorship throughout the history of pop music (record burnings, radio play bannings, Elvis' "waist-up only" appearance, as well as emendations of lyrics to mollify the fears of TV executives and advertisers).
6. Examine isolated incidents of plagiarism in pop music, the resultant lawsuits against artists such as George Harrison and Stevie Wonder, in light of whether or not the suits were justified and whether the alleged plagiarism was conscious or unconscious.

UNIT II: Musical Structure and Development

The student will be able to:

1. Identify and describe typical pop song structures and conventions, such as 32-bar song form and 12-bar blues, and distinguish them from non-pop forms such as sonata, rondo, art songs, or free jazz.
2. Comprehend and discuss how disparate musical idioms such as blues, classical music, and ethnic and world music's have been absorbed and adapted for use in modern pop forms such as funk, heavy metal, and progressive rock.
3. Assess the degree to which the cultural identities and aspirations of various racial and ethnic groups have found expression in American pop music (African American, Appalachian and rural poor white, Latino, and Caribbean) and have contributed to the evolution of both the sound and structure of the music.
4. Intelligently assess the relative artistic quality of the work of various pop artists specifying the criteria used in his/her evaluation.
5. Recognize the basic structural, rhythmic, melodic, and orchestral techniques employed in various pop music genres and be able to group related styles, e.g. Rock-a-billy, surf, funk and R & B.
6. Engage in deep listening, becoming sensitized to the defining nuances of musical detail that characterize and differentiate the various pop music genres.

UNIT III: The Role of Image, Fashion, and Archetype

The student will be able to:

1. Identify and describe the relationship between artist image, or persona, and specific musical styles or eras along with the role of fashion in projecting the image.
2. Identify obvious iconic or archetypal artists (such as Elvis Presley, Bob Dylan, Jim Morrison, Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, the Beatles, Bob Marley, James Brown, Prince)
3. and describe the ways in which their archetypal status embodies the expression of cultural and social values and meaning.
4. Assess the degree to which an artist's use of image and fashion is connected with, or motivated by, a social or political statement and the degree to which the desired effect is achieved.
5. Assess the degree to which an artist's use of image and fashion is purely cosmetic and commercial in nature.
6. Cite and identify the recurrence of specific personae and fashions throughout the history of pop music as archetypal, and analyze the impact of these archetypes on both a conscious and unconscious level.
7. Distinguish between the confessional artist and those employing artifice in terms of their respective use of image, archetype, and fashion.

UNIT IV: The Impact of Technology

The student will be able to:

1. List and describe the major technological advances during the period studied and discuss their impact on the development of pop music on the levels of both recorded and live performance.
2. Analyze recordings from different eras, identifying the time period to which they belong based on the recording techniques employed.
3. Describe the impact that new technologies have on the conception and composition of pop music.
4. Explain how the format of delivery (live concert, radio, TV, 45, LPO, CD, etc.) shapes the content and perception of pop music.
5. Assess the degree to which the evolution of pop music composition and production serves as a catalyst for further growth of technology.

UNIT V: High Art/Low Art Controversy

The student will be able to:

1. Discover and develop their individual critical voice.
2. Evaluate the criticism of others in a thoughtful manner.
3. Understand and explain the conventional critical evaluation of the major artists covered in the course and explain any deviations from the accepted view.
4. Select an artist that the student believes is of major importance and be able to write a forceful justification in terms of artistry, image, impact and influence.
5. Come to an individual conclusion as to the factors leading to critical success and to commercial success and assess why they do not always coincide.

MUSIC 156 HISTORY OF AMERICAN POP MUSIC ANALYTICAL HISTORY OF POP MUSIC IN THE ROCK/R&B ERA COURSE SYLLABUS 2018

I. Description and Objective: This course is designed to provide an in-depth look at pop music from 1950 to the present. Students will not only cover the performers, but will examine the underlying social and cultural issues, issues of race and class, fashion and archetype, the effect of changing technology, and musical structures. II. Resources: The classes will be taught at the Mercer campus. Students are required to purchase the book *What's That Sound* 5th Edition by John Covach & Andrew Flory (this is the Text). You will need to do the readings! Students will also need to watch movies and listen to music available at the library or online. Internet access and the ability to research will be needed. III. Instruction Method: Classroom lectures; audio and visual materials, student discussion and interaction, research assignments and reports, and student presentations will all be used. IV. Evaluation Method: There will be an audio, visual and written midterm and written final paper and class presentation as well as short research assignments. These will cover concepts from the book and classroom lectures and discussions. Some quizzes may be required. Please note that we are covering a lot of material in class that is not in the text. Class attendance and participation shall be included in the evaluation. Since it is unfair to other students, lateness will be penalized. Let me know if you have any problems with attendance in advance. PLEASE NOTE: quizzes and assignments may be added or removed. Pay attention to class announcements. V. Outline by Week (Note: subject to change):

Week 1: Overview. Professor and student introductions and background, grading information (how to get a good grade and enjoy this course), using the text, and a discussion of goals will be presented. The class will examine what makes a song a "pop song" including a listening exercise. A documentary film about the dawn of rock and roll will be accompanied by a worksheet and discussion. Assignment for next week: Read Chapter 2 "Nobody's Dirty Business" in the book *Faking It*, by Baker & Taylor on reserve at the library. Select one non-white music artist (not from *Faking It*) and write a couple pages about what racial issues they encountered (or didn't) and how these affected their career.

Week 2: Students will investigate the precursors to modern American pop music starting with African and European influences. Students will encounter rural and city blues, country/hillbilly, jazz, 1940's pop and the Great American Songbook as these styles led into the 1950's. Turn in affect of discrimination on artist paper. Students will receive the Country Music Quest which is due no later than Week 4 class. Assignment for next week: Read Chapter 1 & the Introduction pages 3 to 18 in Text.

Week 3: The 1950's. The class will survey the major styles and artists of the decade. Attention will be given to early pioneers of rock and roll as well as the social, political and economic culture of the time. Students will learn common song forms; simple verse, verse chorus, AABA, and 12 bar blues. Assignment for next week: Read Chapters 2 & 3 in Text.

Week 4: Elvis – the question of authenticity and appropriation, and the "end of rock and roll". Students will examine the transition from early rock and roll to 60s rock. Included are folk music craze and the teen idols and the Brill building writers, doo-wop, surf music, girl groups and dance crazes. Turn in the completed Country Quest Sheet.

Assignment for next week: Beatles / Stones / Beach Boys Assignment sheet. Listen closely to the selections and answer the questions. Read Chapter 4 & 5 in Text.

Week 5: The 1960's. Class discussion of the rebirth of "Rock" and the reality and myth of the British invasion (The Beatles, Rolling Stones, etc.) and the American response (The Beach Boys, garage, Motown and rival Stax, etc.). Class will view a portion of documentary Respect Yourself: The Stax Records Story. Turn in Beatles/Stones /Beach Boys Assignment. Assignment for next week: Read Chapters 6 & 7 in Text. Complete the Bob Dylan/Jay-Z assignment and the Dylan Covers sheet.

2

Week 6: The 1960's continued. Class will discuss the impact of the baby boom and the counterculture. Students will investigate the rise of the guitar god, hard rock, hippie and flower pop, acid and psychedelic rock, and funk music. The class will consider how technology (amps, microphones, guitar effects, etc.) influenced the sound of music and how different eras are defined by different sounds. Turn in the Bob Dylan/Jay-Z assignment and the Dylan Covers paragraph. Assignment for next week: Find pictures or actual clothes illustrating at least three different styles of clothing distinctive to particular genres of music. Bring, or wear, your examples to next class (week 7). Remember to explain why the performer may have chosen that "look" and the impact of that choice. EXTRA CREDIT: Watch the documentary "Message to Love, the Isle of Wright Festival" on reserve at library and complete assignment sheet. Everyone should at least try to watch some of the performances especially The Doors "The End", some of The Who, Joni Mitchell, Miles Davis, Leonard Cohen, and Jethro Tull. For the guitarist you must check out "I Can't Keep from Crying" Ten Years After.

Week 7: Fashion, image and archetype. In pop it's not just about the music. Class discussion of the way artists and the music industry has used image and packaging to reach and influence the public. Students will consider how many artists use archetypes either consciously or unconsciously in projecting their image. Music videos and live concert footage will be shown to demonstrate. Students will be introduced to analytical tools for evaluating pop music and imagery. Turn in your fashion image examples. Turn in Isle of Wright Extra Credit assignment if done. Assignment for next week: Catch up on reading and study for the test.

Week 8: Midterm exam. Students will listen to recordings and view videos and be asked to write responses along with multiple choice and some written questions. YOU WILL HAVE TO LIST YOUR FINAL PRESENTATION TOPIC ON THE BACK OF YOUR MIDTERM!!!!!! Assignment for next week: Listen to Pink Floyd's "Dark Side of the Moon" album all the way through in one sitting. Write two or more pages describing what you would supply as the visual part of a movie that uses the album as the only soundtrack of the film. The images should relate to the music! Read Chapter 8 in the Text.

Week 9: The 1970's. Rock and funk become the mainstream. Other styles shoot off. Overviews of country and southern rock, the singer songwriter, progressive rock and jazz-rock will be presented. Turn in the Pink Floyd soundtrack assignment. Students must have received Instructor approval of their final presentation topic. Assignment for next week: Read Chapters 15 & 16 in Text. Watch the DVD or Internet of The '70s: Have a Nice Decade from The History of Rock 'n' Roll and answer the handout. Students will receive the Electronic Music Quest which is due no later than Week 11 class. Read chapter 9 all & 10 from the beginning up to page 381.

Week 10: The 1970's continued. Overviews of Glam-rock, pop rock, arena-rock, soul and disco. Students will be asked to defend critically dismissed music. Turn in handout for '70s: Have a Nice Decade. Assignment for next week: Read Chapters 17 & 18 in Text. Watch live performance excerpts on line from the movie The Song Remains the Same Led-Zeppelin, or you can try to see the whole movie. Read chapter 10 pages 381-398 & chapter 12 pages 457-461.

Week 11: Class of '77', here come the punks to kill rock and start the 1980's. Rap enters the scene. Punk is mainstreamed as new wave and hardcore goes underground. Turn in your completed Electronic Music Quest Sheet. Be working on your Final Report! Assignment for next week: Make your personal list of the 5 worst hit songs explaining why you made your choices. Also include why you think the songs were hits. In addition list at least 1 guilty pleasure (a song you are ashamed to really like but do anyway). Watch on Internet Born to be Wild, The Golden Age of American Rock 1980s. There may be a pop quiz on this. Read chapter 12 pages 462-466 & all of chapter 13.

3

Week 12: Worst songs, guilty pleasures and what else was going on. Students will listen to examples of top selling pop that is hated by critics and ask, "If this stuff is so bad, why does it sell so much?" The related topic of fad music such as CB/trucker songs and new swing will be explored. The class will also look at what other types of music were still popular during the time periods covered in the course. Barbra Streisand, Perry Como, Dean Martin, Bobby Goldsboro, Kenny Rogers and other non-rock/rap/R&B artist all had huge hits during this era. Students will follow 80's College rock and DIY as Alternative music goes main-stream. Assignment for next week: Read Chapter 12 pages 438-447 and the "What's That Source?" Views on Metal on pages 478-479 in Text. Complete the Michael Jackson Artist Focus assignment. Turn in your worst song list and guilty pleasures.

Week 13: The 1980's continued. R&B dance music (club, house and other forms pick up the pieces of disco) takes over the charts. Prince and others reinvigorate funk. The class will pick apart what makes 80's Pop so identifiable and the social issues that help shape the music. Also, from the Kinks and Black Sabbath to Poison and Metallica; an overview of heavy metal as 80s hair bands make metal pop. Turn in your Michael Jackson/Prince Artist Focus. Assignment for next week: Complete the Music Festivals of the 90s worksheet. Complete the 80s & 90s Monster R&B Hits Mostly Ignored sheet. Read chapter 12 pages 447-457 and chapters 14 & 15.

Keep working on your final report and presentation! Week 14: The 1990's. Grunge knocks Michael Jackson off the charts Metal gets darker and heavier. Rap takes over as a dominant form of pop music. The class will analyze the roots of Hip-Hop and Rap and its underlying poetic structure. Country music flexes its muscle with Garth Brooks, Dixie Chicks and Shania Twain. Here come the boy bands. Turn in your Music Festivals of the 90s worksheet and the 80s & 90s Monster Hits sheet.

SOME STUDENTS MAY GIVE THEIR CLASS PRESENTATION AT THIS CLASS!

Week 15: Students will present their papers on an artist that was active in the 1990s through the present. Or an artist that they think is important, but the course did not cover or the student thinks was covered too briefly or incorrectly. The student will explain how

the artist fits in the social and musical context of the times and the influences on the artist and how the artist influenced others. Also included should be an analysis of image, fashion and of course, the music of the artist. Don't forget to analyze the music. Be prepared to defend your position. Students will receive handouts giving guidance on the content of the paper and how to do the presentation. Presentations will be limited to about five to ten minutes. Depending on size of class some students may give their presentation in week 14.

Assignment: Get out of here and have some fun.

CONTACT: Professor Jay G. Grubb grubbj@mccc.edu Jayggrubb1@verizon.net Office
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